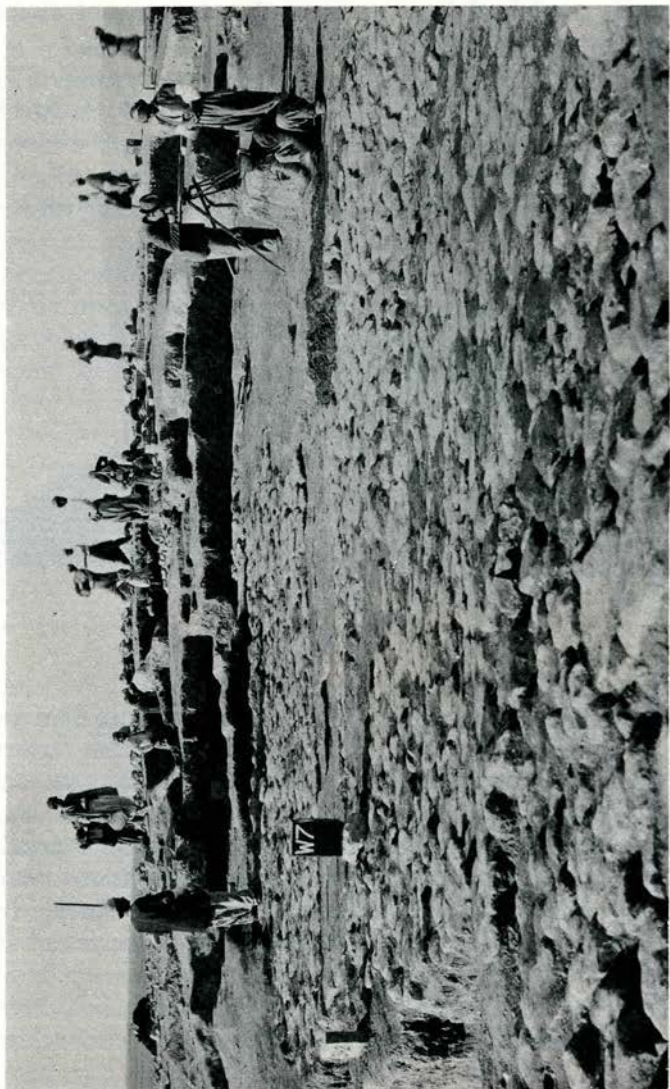


wall and the mud-brick floor of its court. Into this floor there had been dug pits, three rectangular and one round; these were very neatly cut and filled with clean soil of a reddish tint, and at the bottom of one were gypsum blocks measuring up to four feet in length [Plate II]. The gypsum must have been brought from a great distance and was carefully laid in courses; there is nothing below the stones, so whatever object they served was above ground, though the light soil covering them proves that they were not meant to strengthen the foundations of any heavy structure. Mr. Woolley suggests, in explanation of these peculiar pits, that they may have been the foundations for altars that stood in the court and had been prepared in accordance with the Sumerian custom of bringing clean earth for the foundations of a sacred structure—a notable instance being the Harbour Temple, excavated two years ago, which was built on foundations that were themselves a complete temple filled in solidly with clean sand so that no man might enter it.

*The Assyrian
Expedition*

THE latest report from Mr. Charles Bache, the field director, tells of activity in the southwest corner of the mound at Tell Billa, adjacent to the area from which came the bronze bearing the ancient place-name, Shibaniya (*Bulletin*, February 1933). The remains of the first levels excavated were very fragmentary and belonged to the post-Assyrian period. They were characterized by a considerable use of stone, including stone paving, as may be seen from Plate III.

In tracing a drain which led into what was at first thought to be a cistern, the latter was disclosed to have a small door opening into a long, narrow chamber with a vaulted roof, and this chamber in turn led into another, vaulted like the first. These had probably been tombs, but they had been thoroughly robbed



POST-ASSYRIAN WALLS AND STONE COURTYARD AT TELL BILLA, IRAQ

in antiquity and had been converted into part of the drainage system of the post-Assyrian level.

The expedition has been temporarily concentrating its forces on Tell Billa, but before now work will have been resumed at Tepe Gawra also. It is hoped to complete by the end of the season the excavation of the tenth stratum at Tepe Gawra and of the first Assyrian level in the area being undertaken at Tell Billa.



FIGURE A

Exekias

AMONG the most beautiful fragments of painted vases, from Orvieto, Italy, which were acquired in 1897 with the consent of the Italian Government, are the pieces of a black-figured amphora, on both obverse and reverse panels of which were painted a grazing horse and a warrior. From the obverse panel is preserved on one fragment [Plate IV] most of the horse, and on two other fragments (one of them shown in Figure A) the head and part of the shield and garment of the warrior who holds the horse's 'lunge-line.' From the reverse panel very little of the horse is preserved, but almost the entire figure of the attendant, an archer in oriental